

Sustainable Forestry Initiative In Alabama

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Are we in danger of losing our forests, and the wildlife that lives in them? How can we ensure the health and growth of our forests for future generations? Many people of Alabama are asking these questions. As our population expands and our economy grows, responsible people are concerned about our forests. They want assurances that our forests will always be there.

The Alabama Forest Industry understands this concern. Companies that rely on healthy and productive forests for their livelihood have self-interest in making certain that Alabama's forests remain healthy and productive. The Forest Industry has answered the above questions with a new commitment to long-term forestry. It is called the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), a comprehensive program of forestry and conservation practices designed to ensure that future generations of Alabamians will have the same abundant forests that we enjoy today.

The SFI program was developed by the American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA), the national trade group that represents forest and paper companies. AF&PA assembled a task force of experienced professional foresters who spent 18 months crafting the SFI. This careful collaboration produced an ambitious set of forest principles and detailed guidelines that require companies to reforest harvested lands promptly, provide for wildlife habitat, improve water quality and ecosystem diversity, and protect forests of special ecological significance.

In some cases, the SFI suggests a dramatic departure from normal approaches to managing our state resources. Many companies within the forest industry have followed some of these forestry principles, but no company has followed all of them. The SFI is based ultimately on action — real, measurable action — that

will signify industry's progress in meeting its sustainable forestry objectives. Below is an outline of the program organization.

State Implementation Committee (SIC)

This committee has overall responsibility for coordination of the program. Four working sub-committees are charged with carrying out activities in assigned areas. These committees include Logger Education, Public Outreach, Landowner Education, and Inconsistent Practices.



Logger Education Committee

The primary concern of the Logger Education Committee is the training of the loggers of Alabama and the continuous updating of that training. They are also responsible for maintaining a trained logger database, developing the qualified trainers necessary to carry out the logger training programs, and hosting/sponsoring any new or different training program.

Public Outreach Committee

This committee is responsible for communicating to the general public the activities and accomplishments of SFI in

Alabama. It will also develop activities that involve the general public including videos, radio spots, advertisements, a website, displays, and specific activities developed for children and teachers.

Landowner Education Committee

The Landowner Education Committee is responsible for the support, involvement, and education of the private landowner in Alabama. This includes support of existing landowner organizations in Alabama, developing a website in order to make training and other material available to Alabama's landowners, and developing and distributing training and other available material.

Inconsistent Practices Committee

The primary responsibility of this committee is to respond to questions from the general public about activities on member company lands. It has identified ten teams of professionals to go into the field to investigate and respond to questions and problems from the general public. Also, the public can call in questions on forest practices to a toll free number (1-800-206-0981). A professional forester initially handles the questions.

This committee has also developed signs to be used by loggers at highway entrances to logging sites.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiatives Committee in Alabama hopes that through the education of companies, landowners, school children, teachers, and the general public that the forest resource of Alabama will remain productive and healthy. By taking important steps now, we can ensure that our forests will be able to provide products, economic benefits, and personal enjoyment for many generations of Alabamians. ♻️